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The South India Scheme of Union

ANYONE who has not lived in South India for a considerable time needs to acknowledge and to bear in mind the limitation which this circumstance imposes on his capacity for forming a judgment concerning the proposed Scheme of Church Union there. It is a limitation for which compensation cannot adequately be made either by the exercise of sympathy and imagination or by the diligent study of documents. Unless the latter duty is fulfilled, judgment is indeed worthless, and we suspect that it has not been fulfilled by many who have expressed very definite judgments. A commentator on the Beveridge Report observed that the public of Great Britain was divided into three classes: the first, the great majority, who warmly approved it; the second, a resolute minority, firmly determined to oppose it; and the third, the very few who had read it. A somewhat similar observation might not be out of place in the present context.

Our own concern in the South India Scheme is the concern which is incumbent on all Christians in any project for healing the divisions in the universal Church, and furthermore which, in this case, arises from the fact that the Anglican communion in South India participates in this scheme and thereby gives the whole Anglican communion a direct interest in it. It is neither possible nor necessary in this journal to survey the history of the movement towards unity in South India. It is, however, our duty to scrutinize from a theological standpoint the proposed scheme in its final form.[1]

It is important to recall that the present scheme is the outcome of over twenty years' work. Its origin can be traced back to a gathering of members of the Anglican and South India United Churches, which met in 1919. Of the thirty-three members of this group, thirty-one were Indians. The statement that was issued from this gathering contains two passages that direct attention to factors which, it seems, have continuously and insistently influenced all the subsequent negotiations.

(1) We believe that union is the will of God, even as our Lord prayed that we might all be one that the world might believe. We believe that union is the teaching of Scripture, that there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

(2) We face together the titanic task of the winning of India for Christ—one-fifth of the human race. Yet confronted by such an overwhelming re-

[1] *Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India* (Christian Literature Society for India, 1s. 9d.); *The South India Scheme of Union and the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon:* Resolutions passed and documents issued in February, 1942 (S.P.C.K., 1s.).

sponsibility, we find ourselves rendered weak and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions—divisions for which we were not responsible and which have been, as it were, imposed upon us from without; divisions which we did not create, and which we do not wish to perpetuate.

The former of these passages points to what has evidently been paramount in the minds of those who have worked out the scheme of union. They have realized that the motive to Church unity lies in the eternal will of God and not in the temporal advantage of man. They have realized that unity must arise from and be founded in His revealed will, as testimony is borne to it in Holy Scripture. Any suggestion that they have been chiefly motivated by considerations of expediency will appear to be unjust to anyone who studies the official documents. A serious and sustained attempt has been made by the contracting parties to discover whether or not they possessed a sufficient measure of agreement and common understanding of the principles of the Christian Faith to warrant that unity in Church Order to which they believed God was drawing them. This agreement goes farther than many critics of the scheme recognize. We shall return to the question whether it goes far enough.

The passage, that so forcibly defines the task of evangelism by which the Christians in India are confronted, ought to enlist the eager sympathy of Christians everywhere. It is not difficult to imagine either the obstacles to evangelism which arise from the divisions that have been derived from Christianity in the West or the impatience of Indian Christians with their perpetuation. It is not surprising that the desire for union was first voiced by the Indian Christians themselves. What, however, we should like to ascertain is the extent to which Indians have been themselves responsible for preparing the proposed scheme of union. How far is the scheme genuinely indigenous, and how far is it the work of missionaries from the West?

We have more than one misgiving on this score, which the official documents do little, if anything, to allay. A writer in the January issue of the *Congregational Quarterly*, quoting a resolution of one of the Church Councils of the S.I.U.C. which has rejected the present scheme, argues that it is not suited to Indian conditions and Indian thought. He says that the hand of Western Christianity still presses heavily on the Indian Christian Church in South India, and anticipates that the present scheme will issue in separatist movements. This particular writer seems to be more concerned that the Indian Christian Church should be Indian than that it should be Christian "according to the Scriptures," but he confirms a suspicion that, if the movement towards union was originated by Indians, it has been tutored by Europeans. The result is that the scheme may represent a high-minded amalgam of elements from episcopalian, presbyterian and congregationalist traditions of the West rather than an indigenous and, as it were, spontaneous expression in an Indian form of the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. This is not a reason for rejecting the scheme; but it is a warning against misleading notions as to its significance and its promise.

Again, a few years ago an experienced missionary from India, who was himself in sympathy with the scheme, told us that most of the enthusiasm for it in the Churches which propose to unite seemed to exist among their senior members—*i.e.*, the generation of leaders which had been responsible for negotiating the scheme; and that among the younger members—*e.g.*, theological students—there was much indifference and even hostility to the scheme. This is a matter on which the official documents throw no light, but about which we should like to have more information. The scheme comes to us with the recommendation of "Younger Churches," but what if the recommendation is that of the older men in them, and not also of the younger?[1] That would be an extremely ill augury for the working out of this particular scheme. In this connexion, we should like to know what are the intentions as regards the training of ordination candidates and teachers in the United Church. The hope is expressed that the uniting Churches will grow together after the union has been inaugurated. A great deal will surely depend on whether the Church's ministers will in future be trained according to common standards and a common discipline, and in particular whether biblical and dogmatic theology will be treated with the requisite seriousness in the colleges where they will be trained.

This brings us to the directly theological bearings of the proposed scheme. We have already gratefully acknowledged the serious concern with issues of theological principle which is evident throughout the Draft Basis of Union and the Draft Constitution of the United Church. It is not the case that an attempt has been made to evade issues of principle by the use of ingenious formulas; where differences exist they have been frankly acknowledged. There are no false pretences about the scheme in this respect. The question is whether the differences that are acknowledged are such as to prohibit approval of the scheme on theological grounds.

The least satisfactory feature of the scheme is, it seems to us, its declared attitude to episcopacy. As is well known, the United Church will accept and maintain "the historic episcopate in a constitutional form."

But this acceptance does not commit it to any particular interpretation of episcopacy or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry, and it will not require acceptance of any such particular interpretation or view as a necessary qualification for its ministry.

[1] In the West, too, a less sanguine and more grave attitude to the schemes for reunion which have hitherto been projected is becoming manifest, and this divergence cuts across denominational divisions. See M. J. Congar, O.P., *Divided Christendom* (1938); A. M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (1937); D. T. Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity* (1942); and an article on "The Church and the Churches" in *The Evangelical Quarterly* (January, 1943) by R. Gregor Smith, who writes: "It would seem that the real line of cleavage is not between Anglicans and Presbyterians, or between Protestants and Anglo-Catholics, or even between Roman and non-Romans, but between those who are aware of the present disintegration of Western society, of the present judgment of God, and of the present call of the Holy Ghost, and those who cling with wistful and invincible ignorance to the *status quo ante*" (p. 39). *Cf.* Christopher Dawson, *The Judgment of the Nations* (1943), pp. 111, 125*f.*

"Particular interpretation" is an expression which may itself be interpreted in more ways than one. If it meant only that the United Church will not accept or endorse any one of the diverse interpretations that have been current in the uniting Churches, no objection could rightly be raised to the statement. But it appears to mean much more than that—namely, that the United Church deliberately refuses, and is determined to maintain its refusal, to seek dogmatic agreement as to the place of episcopacy in a Catholic and Apostolic Church Order. We are not so complacent as to suppose that it is easy to formulate precisely what is the issue of principle here, or that the formularies of the Church of England contain a dogmatic test on this subject which we can and must apply to every other form of Church Order. The Bishop of Gloucester has pointed out[1] that the formularies of the Church of England were so drawn up as to assert clearly our own rule and practice, but without condemning the ministries of other Churches. We believe that this was a justifiable course in the circumstances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But unfortunately a refusal to define the theological principles at stake, which was opportune then, has since been erected into a kind of official Anglican axiom. It is notorious that the statement which we have quoted from South India reflects fairly accurately a state of mind which pervades the Anglican communion as a whole, and nowhere more conspicuously than in England itself.

Now it is one thing to acquiesce for the time being in this refusal to decide whether or not the episcopate is an essential part of any Church Order that is to be recognized as Catholic and Apostolic, or in other words whether or not the episcopate continues that element in "the structure of catholicism" which was provided by the Apostolate in the Church of the New Testament. (See Canon A. M. Ramsey's book *The Gospel and the Catholic Church.*) It is quite another thing to define and formally to accept this refusal as a ground of agreement on which Church union may proceed.

Is the Church of England, however, really in a position to take the South Indians to task in this matter? Its own episcopal order can hardly be said at present to be a model of constitutional episcopacy, even if it would be an exaggeration to describe it as a decadent prelacy. But apart from corruptions in practice, it has persistently neglected to clear up its own mind on the doctrinal question, and has been satisfied with justifying its allegiance to episcopacy on either historical grounds[2] or grounds of expediency, though at the same time it has never denied that episcopacy must be maintained on grounds of Scriptural principle. It is just because this question is bound to arise in every proposal for

[1] *The Guardian*, January 15, 1943. See also A. J. Mason, *The Church of England and Episcopacy* (1914), *passim*.

[2] It is significant that far more attention has been bestowed upon historical essays, such as Lightfoot's dissertation on "The Christian Ministry," Gore's *The Church and the Ministry*, or Streeter's *The Primitive Church*, than on doctrinal essays, such as R. C. Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood* or Frank Weston's *The Fulness of Christ*. *Cf.* H. L. Goudge, *The Church of England and Reunion* (1938), pp. 196*f*.

Church union, whether in South India or anywhere else, that we must challenge the idea that it is tolerable to go on evading it.

There is enough point to disturb us in Professor Karl Barth's challenge to the episcopal churches: "The adherents of an evangelical episcopate have never yet made sufficiently clear what is actually to be understood by the special office of bishop in an evangelical church. I am not aware if they know in Hungary—or in England, or in Sweden, or in Denmark—where there are evangelical Bishops."[1] Are we to continue to evade this challenge and, what is more, to base schemes of Church union on a deliberate evasion of it?

The Report of the Committee on "The Unity of the Church" at the Lambeth Conference (1930) went some way towards offering an answer, when it said: "The Historic Episcopate . . . is not a mere fact, but an institution fulfilling certain purposes"; and then specified the following as its "generally recognized functions": "The general superintendence of the Church, and more especially of the clergy; the maintenance of unity in the one Eucharist; the ordination of men to the ministry; the safeguarding of the faith; and the administration of the discipline of the Church." But, although it says that "the Historic Episcopate as we understand it goes behind the perversions of history to the original conception of the Apostolic Ministry," it says very little about this "original conception" or about the relation of the Historic Episcopate to the Gospel. It records that "in the experience of many of us this heritage of Faith and Order seems to be one and indivisible, and to have its roots in the redemptive method of God in the Incarnation," but this appears to be regarded as only a pious opinion which is not borne out by the "experience" of others. This, however, is the vital theological question.

In this respect the section that deals with "The Ministry" in *Doctrine in the Church of England* (1938) is more satisfactory, and it implicitly criticizes the Lambeth Report for its preoccupation with the historical, as distinguished from the theological, aspects of Episcopacy (p. 121, *n.*). *Doctrine in the Church of England*, without assuming a dubious historical basis, does propound a definitely theological interpretation of the relation between the Ministry and the Gospel, and of the place of the Episcopate in the structure of the Church. Before the Church of England is committed to any schemes for reunion it ought to decide whether such an interpretation may be proved by Holy Scripture so that "it should be believed as an article of the Faith" (Art. VI), and whether, according to that standard, Episcopacy belongs (in Bramhall's words) to "the true nature and essence of a Church" or "to the integrity and perfection of a Church."[2] This is the aspect of the matter in which younger Protestant theologians are rightly becoming most interested. Thus, Mr R. Gregor Smith, writing in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, says: "The episcopate . . . will possibly in the end have to be recognized as part of a full Church order. But such recognition must always be from within the proper theological

[1] *The Knowledge and the Service of God* (1938), pp. 186*f.*
[2] John Bramhall, *Works* (L.A.C.T.), iii, 518.

dependence on the judgment of Christ presented in the witness of the apostles: only thus are the possibilities of *rapprochement* genuinely Christian and not merely pragmatic or worldly."[1]

We think that it will be found that most of the other objections which have been raised against the proposed scheme in South India[2] arise out of and depend upon the refusal to face this major question. The Christians in South India have themselves to decide whether they ought to go ahead with the proposed scheme. Christians elsewhere can offer comment and criticism at this stage in the way of advice, and if the union comes into effect all the other Churches involved will then have to face (or refuse to face) the issues of principle by which their relations with the Church of South India should be determined. On any showing, these relations will be complicated and, in some respects, anomalous. It seems to us that Anglicans in England, instead of attacking (or applauding) the South India proposals, ought to attack themselves for having so long refused to make up their minds on the essential principles of Faith and Order in the Church of Christ. As to the practical corollaries of such an attack, we may be allowed to refer to what we wrote less than a year ago in an editorial on "The New Archbishop and his Task."[3] Until theology is taken more seriously in the Church at home, it ill becomes us to throw stones at deficiencies in theological statement or ecclesiastical proposal in the Church overseas.

A. R. V.

Holy Baptism

In the Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Doctrine the Holy Eucharist occupies some forty-seven pages, Holy Baptism approximately three. This is probably a fair sample of the proportion of space and attention given in our current theology to Baptism in comparison with the Eucharist. There is something very odd about it and hard to explain. It is not that there is any general agreement on the doctrine of the sacrament rendering a lengthy treatment unnecessary, or that there has been any lack of controversy in the past to bring it before the notice of the theologians. There is probably no greater agreement now than in the days of the last century, when controversy was fierce and prolonged. But this nineteenth-century controversy seems to have settled nothing and to have died away exhausted. Attention came to be concentrated on the Holy Communion, partly perhaps because differences on Eucharistic theology had obvious consequences for things that men really cared about, their manner of public worship, their devotional life, in fact the whole pattern of their spirituality. Again, the Eucharist, whether regarded primarily as the

[1] January, 1943, p. 38. *Cf.* D. T. Jenkins, *op. cit.*

[2] See, for instance, the judicious and temperate statement of these objections in *Some Problems connected with the Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India*, by the Bishop of Colombo (S.P.C.K., 1s.).

[3] See Theology, May, 1942, especially p. 259*f*.

Church's offering or as the food of the individual soul, could be treated on its own, apart from any general doctrine of grace and the Fall. A Pelagian could hold quite a high doctrine of the Eucharist, and usually a man's soundness on this sacrament guaranteed his soundness as a churchman generally. But there could be no full and satisfactory discussion of Holy Baptism without such a Christian anthropology. For various reasons, among them the disappearance of the genuine old Evangelicalism as a serious theological influence and the general acceptance of a vaguely evolutionary view of human nature, many modern Anglicans tend to fight shy of the doctrine of grace. Some of us seem content to repeat the formulas of the past without inquiring seriously if the theology which they express is the one by which we really live; others appear to regard disputes over grace and the Fall as sixteenth-century vices from which progress, the modern English temperament, and similar blessings, have afforded us a happy deliverance. However we may explain it, this comparative neglect of Baptism is strange, and it may well be that a greater emphasis on the sacrament of Christian initiation is especially necessary in the circumstances of our time.

The two great defects of Anglo-Saxon Christianity are moralism and individualistic pietism. On the one view man's business in life is conformity to a code or response to certain ideals, and religion is regarded as at the best a useful auxiliary in the promotion of conformity or response. Thus, in a book of considerable reputation published not long ago we were told that Christ's ideals of the Kingdom of God began to be realized for the first time in British democratic institutions, the author's assumption being that our Lord taught certain ideals about human brotherhood and that the particular political institutions which he recommends realize these ideals. A similar view underlies much of the popular teaching on "building the Kingdom." On the other view, individual pietism, which is of course far more profound and free from this naive secularism, religion is regarded purely as a private relation between God and the individual soul, and the evidence of the reality of this relation is found in certain emotional experiences. The sacrament of Baptism is an embodied protest against either error. As against the first it proclaims that the Kingdom of God is not to be found in human ideals or institutions, that all these things, however excellent, are natural values, and that transcending them are the supernatural values—redemption, grace, charity, and eternal life. Against the second it proclaims that religion is not merely an individual matter, an affair of the alone with the Alone, but an incorporation of the individual into the People of God, the historic community which goes back to the call to Abraham to leave his own country, which was reconstituted in the person of the Kingdom-bearing Messiah, and through which the divine purpose in history will be fulfilled when the body of redeemed humanity has grown into the stature of the fulness of the Christ. Baptism, indeed, to use a current phrase, might be described as a sacrament of realized eschatology, for it is concerned with the fact that the Kingdom of God has been realized.

In my Baptism, says the catechism, I was made an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, and this assertion of a connexion between the sacrament and the divine Kingdom is made or implied frequently in the Baptismal Office itself. The opening exhortation quotes the two sayings to Nicodemus: *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, and *Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* The priest prays that the child may enjoy the everlasting benediction of the heavenly washing and come to the eternal kingdom. The Gospel is the passage in St Mark where our Lord says of the children that *Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, and that *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom as a little child shall not enter therein.* The congregation are told to believe without doubting that Christ will receive the child and make him partaker of His everlasting Kingdom. The godparents are reminded that they have prayed our Lord to sanctify the child and give him the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life. In the thanksgiving after Baptism God is asked to grant that the child may finally with the residue of Holy Church inherit the everlasting Kingdom. In this language one notices a certain ambiguity. The child is made an inheritor and not merely an heir of the Kingdom, and yet we pray that he with the residue of the Church may inherit the Kingdom. The Kingdom is spoken of as something both given and yet to be received. The baptized person enters into an inheritance, and yet that inheritance belongs to the land of everlasting life.

The Kingdom or reign of God is in the first place the effectual assertion of God's sovereignty. The Lord was Israel's king, and in so far as Israel obeyed the Law of God His Kingdom was a present reality. But, to say nothing of Israel's sins, the nations of the world did not recognize the kingly rule of Israel's God, the holy nation was under the dominion of the Gentiles, and the world worshipped false gods and lords. Israel therefore hoped for the day of the Lord when the divine sovereignty would be manifested and the divine Kingdom established. The Kingdom is thus eschatological; it is the final intervention of God to visit and redeem His people. When that had happened the Kingdom would have fully and finally come. This coming could be thought of as temporal, the triumph of Israel over its enemies under a warrior Messiah, the overthrow of the idolatrous nations, and the entry of the people of the Most High into dominion over the world. Or again, the Kingdom could be thought of as transcending the temporal order entirely, and then the coming of the Kingdom would be the catastrophic breaking in of a new order, the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth, the coming upon this age of another age. On either view it is the end of man's history, that final event in which God's purpose is fulfilled, but on the second view the end of history would be a supra-historical order of existence.

It is this second view that we find in the teaching of our Lord. He rejected a political Messiahship and earthly kingdom, and He uses the phrases Kingdom, Life, and Eternal Life—that is, Life of the World to come—as synonymous (*cf.* St Mark ix). Ultimately the Kingdom is not temporal but outside this order of space and time where the blessed dead live as the angels. The central message of the New

Testament is that Israel's hope of the coming of the Kingdom has been fulfilled, that the Age to Come is upon men, that the supernatural order has broken in upon the natural. The hope of Israel is now no longer a hope but a fact of experience. *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see, for I say unto you that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see and saw them not.* As the immediate herald of the coming of the Kingdom, John the Baptist was a prophet, and more than a prophet, and yet the disciples are greater than he, for what he announced they experience. With John the old dispensation ended. *All the prophets and the law prophesied until John.* It was thus as the eschatological fulfilment of Israel's hope that Christianity was preached by the Apostles. *Giving thanks,* says St Paul, *to the Father who delivered us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.* Christians, says the Epistle to the Hebrews, have already tasted the powers of the world to come. It is for them not a matter of hope but of experience. *This is that,* said St Peter at Pentecost, *which hath been spoken by the prophet,* the gift of the Spirit at the Day of the Lord. *Repent ye, and be baptized.* This, then, in brief is the theme of the New Testament, that in Jesus the Messiah the Kingdom of God came upon men for judgment or redemption.

For the greater part of the Israel of God that coming was unto judgment, and in the external events of history the judgment was expressed in the destruction of Jerusalem and the overthrow of Judaism. As had happened at previous anticipatory judgments, only a remnant of the People of God remained faithful. At the decisive hour that Remnant, the true Israel, was concentrated in one man, the Messianic bearer of the Kingdom upon the Cross in whom Israel was reconstituted. Henceforth membership in the Israel of God did not depend on descent from Abraham after the flesh but on union with Him who was the true seed of Abraham, in whom the promises had been fulfilled. To be united into Him was to be incorporated into the Israel upon whom the Kingdom had come. *Are ye ignorant,* says St Paul, *that all we who were baptized into Messiah Jesus were baptized into His death?* And again: *As many of you as were baptized into Messiah did put on Messiah.* And in a profoundly concentrated passage the Apostle says: *As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Messiah. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.* Jesus the Messiah and the members of His Church are one, and this membership, this union with Him in whom the Kingdom came, is symbolized and effected by Baptism. The individual Christian is not merely united to his Lord by a moral union of the will; he is a member of the Messiah and has been translated into the Kingdom of the Son of God. Are we to say, then, that the Church is the Kingdom of God upon earth *simpliciter*? If the Kingdom is the effective assertion of God's sovereign rule it seems impossible that a fellowship of sinners should be the Kingdom or that the external rite of admission to this visible society is the means by which a man inherits the Kingdom of God. Essentially the difficulty is identical with the fundamental paradox of the Gospel that the end of history has come upon history and yet history goes on, that in the redemptive

activity of Jesus the Messiah the world to come has broken upon this world and yet this world continues and is neither abolished nor catastrophically transformed. The Christian, according to St Paul, by his incorporation into the church-body of the Messiah had been translated from the power of darkness into the Kingdom. In receiving the Spirit he had received the earnest of the inheritance. That is to say, the Spirit, the supernatural life in the Messianic community, was the earnest, the first instalment, of the full supernatural life of the completely realized Kingdom of Heaven. The important distinction in the Apostle's thought is not between those in earth and those in heaven but between those who are still in darkness and the flesh and those who have passed into the sphere of the new creation, whether they have received the new life in its fulness or only its earnest, its foretaste and first instalment in the present world. The Church is both the mystical body of the Messiah and also a congregation of sinful men. It is right to distinguish between the Church in its essential nature as the mystical body and the Church as a visible society, but to recognize the importance of the distinction is not to separate what is distinguished. To be baptized is not merely to be admitted to the Church as visible, it is to be united for good or evil to the Church in the fulness of its Messianic reality. The contrast between the supernatural reality of the Church's life and the fact that Christians are sinners who may fall away is brought out strongly by St Paul in his warning to the Corinthians: *I would have you know this, my brothers, that while our fathers all lived under the cloud, all crossed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses by the cloud and by the sea, all ate the same supernatural food, and all drank the same supernatural drink . . . still with most of them God was not satisfied; they were laid low in the desert. Now this took place as a warning for us to keep us from craving for evil as they craved* (1 Cor. x, 1-7, Moffatt's Tr.). The Apostle regards the experiences of Israel under the Old Covenant as a divinely appointed type and warning for Israel under the new Messianic Covenant. Israel now enjoys the supernatural life of the Messianic order by the sacraments. But the fathers under Moses had enjoyed privileges analogous to these, and despite the reality of the supernatural experience the greater part of them fell away. Israel as a whole experienced the deliverance from Egypt and yet the greater part did not enter the Promised Land. The New Israel has experienced the deliverance from the spiritual Egypt and yet its members may fail to enter into the fulness of their inheritance. These things, says St Paul, happened unto them typically, by way of example, *and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come*, in whose experience, that is, the eschatological hope has been fulfilled. The moral he draws is *let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* We may think the Apostle's exegesis strange, but it would be harder to find a clearer statement of the truth that the visible community of the Church which we enter by Baptism lives by the supernatural life of the Spirit as the Messianic community, and that its members may cast away what they have received.

Baptism in the New Testament period was normally the Baptism of adults, and it seems generally agreed that baptism and the laying

on of hands were then two parts of one rite. Subsequent development has brought it about that most baptisms are of infants and in the West Confirmation is reserved to a later age. That this development is congruous with the New Testament seems hardly doubtful. The analogy between the Covenants of the Old and New Israel would probably in itself be sufficient proof. In the former dispensation children were capable of admission to the People of God by circumcision, and unless there is clear proof to the contrary they are capable of admission still, by the rite which has superseded circumcision. When a child is baptized the Kingdom of God comes upon it. It is brought within the sphere of the New Creation, grafted into the Church-body of the Messiah in whom the Kingdom came. In what way could the prevenience of grace be better expressed? But this is not to say that the sacrament is non-moral or magical, since whether it is received in infancy or adult life the baptismal gift has to be appropriated. And it is gravely doubtful whether we have any right to give Baptism when there is not a sufficient moral certainty that the child will really be brought up within the life of the New Israel to which Baptism admits it. Apart from the special case of baptism given to a child in danger of death, may it not be a degradation of the sacrament to give it where there is not a sufficient certainty that the baptism will receive its normal completion in Confirmation? The peculiar difficulties of this part of Christian discipline spring from the fact that urban Anglo-Saxon civilization is in a state of transition; it has ceased to be an effectively Christian society without having as yet become anything else. If it does develop into a positively non-Christian society this problem may be solved, for then only the minority who are actively Christian are likely to continue to bring their children to the font.

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Studies in Texts

The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.—Matthew xxi, 14.

Has the full significance of this statement been missed by the commentaries[1]? Is there not here an echo of 2 Samuel v, 8? The Hebrew text may be in disorder, but the last words of the verse can only mean (R.V. marg.): "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house" —*i.e.*, into the Temple (Driver, *ad loc.*). "Wherefore they say" indicates the existence of a proverb or a regulation excluding the blind and

1 With the exception, perhaps, of Lagrange, who writes: "Les aveugles et les boiteaux, d'après le proverbe tel qu'il est cité dans le Bible grecque, n'entreront pas dans la maison du Seigneur (II. Regn., v, 8). Ceux de l'évangile se tenaient peut-être près de la porte; ils s'approchent du Messie et sont guéris, à l'instar de ceux dont Jésus avait parlé aux envoyés du Baptiste." *Evangile selon Saint Matthieu* (*ad loc.*).—Ed. Theology.

the lame from the Temple. The LXX is quite explicit in its interpretation: "Therefore they say, The blind and the lame shall not enter into the house of the Lord." The Targum paraphrases (or interprets): "Sinners and guilty ones shall not come into the house," echoing the traditional Jewish idea that physical defects were the consequence of sin.

In the New Testament we find the blind and the lame *near* the Temple, but not in it. After healing they enter the Temple. For this, see—(*a*) John v, 14: The lame man who hitherto had to lie at the Bethesda pool is now found by our Lord "in the Temple." (*b*) Acts iii, 8: The lame man, before healing, could only lie at a gate of the Temple (ver. 2); after healing he enters the Temple with Peter and John. (*c*) John ix, 34: The man blind from birth is "cast out"—*i.e.*, of the Temple, as the Pharisees still judge him a "sinner" even though healed of his blindness. Here (as in v, 14) our Lord would have found the man in the Temple had he not been thus cast out (ver. 35).

Did the exclusion of the blind and the lame from the Temple (as referred to in the LXX) live on as a regulation into New Testament times? If so, is there not a special significance in St Matthew's statement that the blind and the lame came to our Lord in the Temple, and that our Lord received them and healed them in the Temple itself? Here is One who can and will override the traditional ban on the afflicted children of God. He welcomes them into the House of God, from which He had cast out the "thieves and robbers." The act is Messianic. The Lord, whom the afflicted sought, had suddenly come to His Temple and was manifesting His authority and power by receiving them and healing them. The outcasts of society find God present indeed in His House—present in His love and mercy. The Temple is indeed the Temple of God.

JOHN GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESENCE: A STUDY OF THE AT-ONE-MENT. By W. J. Phythian-Adams. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

Dr Phythian-Adams is already well known as a vigorous exponent of biblical theology; and in this work he carries forward the positions already won in his previous volumes. His main theme is that underlying the Christian idea of Atonement is the "strangely neglected" teaching about the "tabernacling" Presence.

In early days in Israel, Dr Phythian-Adams reminds us, faith and worship were focused on the Ark, which provided an effective guarantee that God indeed *walked* with His people. But the building of the Temple, the disruption of the kingdom (which meant that the bulk of the people were permanently cut off from the Presence), and the realization of the utter holiness of Jahweh, resulted in the conviction that "heaven" alone was fit for Him to dwell in. The tension between these two ideas Dr Phythian-Adams calls "the Dualism of Covenant-Theology"; and he shows how the earlier belief successfully

survived alongside the later. In the post-exilic period priest no less than prophet looked forward to the day when the Presence, withdrawn at the Exile, should return.

In the New Testament we see this hope fulfilled. For St Mark, Jesus is the Presence. St Stephen suffered because he affirmed "that the God of Israel had rejected the Temple 'made with hands' and that in Jesus His people must now recognize the 'Lord' of a new Naos." St Paul interprets this Naos correctly as the Church—"the Naos-Body." And finally the coping-stone is added by St John, who identifies the Presence with the Word, which now "made flesh" "tabernacles" in us, the members of His Body, and makes us at one with Him.

In an *Epilogue* Dr Phythian-Adams contrasts this Scriptural "mystery of At-one-ment" with the existing situation. But he sees no need for despair. Christians must seize the opportunity; and their immediate duty is "to go back to the fountain-head of Holy Scripture and learn from it how to . . . make manifest to the nations the riches of the glory of their inheritance in the saints."

Despite the obvious importance of the thesis and the attractive style of its presentation, the treatment is far too one-sided. For example, the prophet *par excellence* of Divine Transcendence (Deutero-Isaiah) is unashamedly by-passed; the numerous eschatological aspirations which have no direct reference to the Presence are neglected entirely; and how many scholars would agree that St Paul's "thoughts" and the "background" of his readers "have one place of origin only, the Holy Scriptures" (p. 182)? Again, because Dr Phythian-Adams finds in *Hebrews* that "the dualistic tension of covenant-theology has disappeared" he has some very hard things indeed to say about the author: thus his religion is "natural, rational"; his Gospel is merely "a Gospel of Enlightenment"; and so on. Such remarks are to be expected from theologians who appeal to the Bible only when it happens to support their own ideas; but they come very oddly from one who professes to regard the whole as "the inspired record of Sacred History" and the "fountain-head" of Truth.

Futhermore, one gets the impression that Dr Phythian-Adams is perpetually struggling with criticism. Sometimes he is ultra-conservative; at others he is startlingly radical. And the struggle becomes acute in the treatment of the relationship between St Paul and St John. On one page we are told that by taking steps "which St Paul . . . could have taken yet never actually did take St John . . . crowns the work of his predecessor" (p. 212); on the next that St John makes a practice of "confirming St Paul's doctrine out of the mouth of Jesus Himself" (pp. 213, 216). Thus the reader is never certain whether he is being presented with Johannine theology or the *ipsissima verba* of our Lord; and the argument suffers accordingly.

Most controversy, however, is likely to be raised by the proposed interpretation of John i, 14. According to Dr Phythian-Adams "the Word became flesh and dwelt in us" refers not to the Incarnation but to what he calls the Incorporation—that is, to the "tabernacling" of the Lord in the Body of the Church. Dr Phythian-Adams himself

meets some of the possible objections, but he does not mention what would appear to be the most obvious—namely, that the immediately following aorist ("we *beheld* His glory") must surely refer to a past, rather than to a present, experience; and since on any showing the experience referred to is experience of the being "made flesh" and of the "tabernacling" of the Word, these must also be past. Consequently, although the permanent indwelling of the People by the Presence may be, and is, the result of what the Evangelist describes, one can hardly suppose it to be his primary meaning.

Is not "fourth" on p. 290, l. 3, a slip of the pen for "fifth"?

DURHAM. H. F. D. SPARKS.

TOWARDS BELIEF IN GOD. By H. H. Farmer. S.C.M. Press. 8s. 6d.
A PREFACE TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. By J. A. Mackay. Nisbet. 7s. 6d.
THE ABOLITION OF CHRISTIANITY. By J. Maarten. S.C.M. Press. 3s. 6d.

The dark purpose lying behind the request that these three books should be reviewed together remains a secret locked in the editorial breast. At first sight they seem an odd assortment. Two of them—Dr Farmer's and Dr Mackay's—have obvious affinities; they are worthy products of the same workshop, that fine tradition of Presbyterian divinity which is maintained in the Scottish universities and at Westminster College, Cambridge. Their writers are academic theologians with an evangelical spirit. They have important things to say on great matters of the Christian faith, and say them freshly and effectively, with a sensitive touch on the theological pulse of to-day. To move from them to Mr Maarten and his broadsides of vituperation against that "out-moded bourgeois ideology," Christianity, is to pass into a very different atmosphere.

Yet in one respect—and that fundamental—there is agreement between these three Protestant writers. It is to be found in the emphasis they lay, each in his own manner, on a transforming personal experience in the life of the individual as the heart of true religion. Dr Farmer finds the ultimate, though not the only, ground of belief to be an apprehension of God "given with a certain compelling and unanalysable immediacy" in religious experience. For Dr Mackay the essence of the matter is a "personal encounter" with Jesus Christ. And Mr Maarten, in a high state of excitement, fulminates against what he calls Christianity, because it has lost that unconditional trust in the Holy Spirit's guidance which, he believes, marked the only true followers of Christ, the primitive Christian community of rebels and revolutionaries; a faith which even now—according to Kierkegaard and Mr Maarten—marks the secret and hidden little band of real Christians which exists among us.

Dr Farmer's book is the most substantial and weighty of the three. Those who have read his earlier work will need no recommendation to read *Towards Belief in God*. It is an admirable study of three elements

in belief in God, which Dr Farmer calls coercive, pragmatic and reflective. He decisively rejects the view that God's existence can be proved by cogent demonstrative argument, but he is not irrationalist; the second half of the book is devoted to showing that belief in God makes sense of the world and provides us with a reasonable and credible philosophy. The coercive element is to be found in the immediacy of religious experience, and the pragmatic element in the personal verification of belief by the way in which it fits the human situation.

Needless to say, the discussion is on a high level of seriousness and demands close attention; but the book is incisively written, and will be found valuable by any educated inquirer who is prepared to think seriously on the greatest of all themes. Not all theologians will agree with Dr Farmer in his dismissal of the rational proofs of God's existence or think that he has disposed of the Thomist position as it is presented, for example, by a philosophical theologian like Fr D'Arcy in his *Nature of Belief*.

Dr Mackay, the President of Princeton Theological Seminary, is a Scot who has a wide experience of Latin America as well as of the States. His book is based on lectures given, it seems, to American audiences and intended as "a foreword to theological discussion" for the ordinary intelligent reader. It fulfils its purpose both pleasantly and efficiently. In a short compass it covers many of the major themes of Christian faith and morals, and the treatment, though inevitably on broad lines, is not trivial or superficial. The book is helped along by its easy picturesque style (sometimes too easy, as in the reckless use of the word "crusade") and by the writer's power of crisp analysis and exposition. The first four chapters deal with theology as "one of our most crucial needs," with "the creative approach to truth" as "an encounter . . . with Jesus Christ, the personal Truth," and find the clue to history in "the unfolding purpose of God to create a world-fellowship in Christ." The Christian life is then presented in terms of spiritual freedom and supernatural brotherhood; and a final chapter considers the Church and the secular order.

These two books are essentially statements of a Christian *Weltanschauung*. That is just what Mr Maarten regards as anathema. Christianity, he tells us, from being a faith has become a philosophy of life (*Weltanschauung*); and a philosophy of life is a temporary thing which dies to make room for other philosophies. So Christianity is disintegrating. "I acknowledge that *Christ* is the Truth, though I am a traitor. My question is whether *Christianity* is the truth." His answer is in the negative. "To be a Christian means being a disciple of Christ. Christianity has rendered me quite useless as regards this further step. . . . I am certainly not a Christian. But I stand in with Christianity. I belong to it. I share its bankrupt state." And so we go on. Mr Maarten enjoys himself immensely as he piles up one derisive aphorism upon another in what he calls "this public scourging" of Christianity. A special note for English readers somewhat nervously warns us that Christianity as the author sees it is to be understood in the light of the contrasting phrase "Christ's congregation" (*Gemeinde Christi*), which throughout the book stands for the genuine

article before organization and worldliness and bourgeois self-satisfaction came in to ruin it.

Denunciations of conventional Christianity are far from novel; but Heaven forbid that we should say they are unnecessary. Perhaps some may find this well-peppered variation on an old theme to their liking, but we doubt whether it helps us to get on with the business of eradicating our miseries. The publishers inevitably apply that much misused word "prophetic" to the book; but it takes more than a copious shower of verbal brickbats to remind us of the prophets of Israel. They said with precision what was wrong and what was right. Mr Maarten gives us nothing but a violently expressed contrast between a highly romanticized primitive Christian community of immaculate disciples and a devitalized Christianity which has been squared by the world, turned into a "religion" and so become futile and contemptible.

But the author, in a note to the second Swiss edition, warns off dissatisfied reviewers in this truly remarkable sentence: "To whitewash the situation, or to take the sting out of criticism, is the strategy usually associated with the ostrich." So we will leave it at that.

ELY. H. BALMFORTH.

THE NATURE OF BELIEF. By F. R. Tennant. Centenary Press. 5s.

Dr Tennant's contribution to the Christian Challenge Series is a discussion of belief from the point of view of psychology and theory of knowledge, and with special reference to religious belief. His treatment of the subject is very clear and logical, and his readers should be grateful for his magisterial nineteenth-century prose style. Surely, however, it was an impossible undertaking to attempt to cover in some hundred pages the whole question of belief, its nature, its reasons, its causes, its place in personality, without forgetting such neighbouring subjects as faith, mysticism, the authority of Church and Scriptures, and to do so with learning but also with simplicity. Inevitably Dr Tennant's essay falls between two stools; its subject is too sophisticated and its treatment too learned for the plain man who wants to know when to believe; while, on the other hand, the man who can swallow such words as "numen," "alogical" or "obliviscence," and is interested in Brentano or Stout, will certainly demand a much longer discussion of nearly every point. To take one example, from the treatment of induction, if I have read enough about the subject to understand what the refined substitute for the Principle of Uniformity here quoted was advanced by its authors to achieve, I may well remain unimpressed by the *ipsi dixerunt* of the "Cambridge logicians who discovered it." If I have not, the whole passage is beyond me.

Briefly, Dr Tennant's thesis is that for the needs of daily life, material as well as spiritual, we require, and in fact use, a large number of Beliefs which cannot be proved by rigorous inference from indubitable data (*i.e.*, are not "rational" Beliefs). This is established by showing the poverty of the Beliefs which can be so demonstrated. Our author

then passes on to discuss and distinguish the subjective and objective causes of belief-attitudes in us, and to say when it is that common sense accepts Beliefs which cannot be shown to be "rational" as, none the less, essentially "reasonable." He then examines mysticism to see whether mystical experience offers us indubitable data, and decides that it does not, saying, somewhat arbitrarily, that the mystic can only discriminate the real from the hallucinatory in his experiences by using his metaphysical Beliefs. Finally, these common-sense conclusions about belief are shown to allow, and indeed somewhat encourage, belief in God and even in the authority of Church and Scriptures.

From the point of view of analytical clarity, setting aside the irritation which comes from the continual answering of questions we have not had time to discuss, this is an excellent treatment of a common but true theme. Many readers, however, will feel that Dr Tennant sadly lacks synthetic insight and sympathy with writers of lesser clarity. It is not the purpose of the book to argue the rightness of Christian belief other than by the way; but when the work of analysis had been done it would have been of value to be shown the place of belief in the life of the Christian. Similarly, the sharp distinction between the "faith" of Hebrews xi and of St Paul is misleading unless accompanied by a reconciliation. Again, the criticism of writers who have held that religious belief is assent given by the will is a refutation without an understanding. Finally, the age-long attempt to show the compatibility of divine grace and human freedom is simply assumed to be a wild-goose chase (p. 104). Our urbane philosophical English tradition of theological approach can doubtless be a valuable irenic factor in these disturbed times; but only if we approach writers of another temper with the keenest sympathy.

I. M. Crombie.

Sidcup.

Church Life and Church Order during the First Four Centuries. Birkbeck Lectures, 1924. By James Vernon Bartlet. Edited by C. J. Cadoux. Blackwell. 15s.

Many besides those who are able to recall the genial personality of the author, so attractively and faithfully portrayed in the Biographical Memoir forming the Introduction to this book, will be grateful to Dr Cadoux for having made available, after a lapse of many years, the *Birkbeck Lectures* of 1924. The purpose of the Lectures is to show that by a study of the primitive Church Orders, beginning with the *Didache*, the earliest edition of which the author assigns to a date "soon after the death of Peter in A.D. 65" (p. 35), there can be traced "a form of Catholicism which includes, and no longer excludes, the great ideas connected with the freedom of the Spirit, which are rooted in primitive Christianity." Among the Church Orders and cognate documents examined by Dr Bartlet, besides the *Didache*, are *1 Clement*, the *Shepherd* of Hermas, the *Demonstration* of Irenæus, the letter of Firmilian, the Syrian *Didaskalia*, the *Apostolic Church Order*, the "*Hippolytean*" *Church Order*, the *Prayer Book* of Serapion, and the

Apostolic Constitutions. With considerable skill the author conducts his readers through territory, much of which is still debatable among historians, and leads them triumphantly to the conclusion already quoted. Some, however, may be disposed to ask what this means. For if, as the author affirms, the famous Vincentian canon "is still less applicable as an historical test of Catholic order than it is of Catholic doctrine," it would appear that he believes that no form of Church Order can claim real finality. No doubt at the time that these Lectures were written such a view was steadily gaining ground. This can scarcely be regarded as equally true to-day. In the background lies the age-long problem of the integration of Freedom and Authority, and in spite of all that Dr Bartlet has put forward in defence of the former, supported, as he would hold, from the evidence of the documents already cited, he leaves us without any real answer as to the true seat of the latter, apart from the subjective witness of the "religious consciousness." The pragmatic test of truth, whether in the sphere of Faith or of Order, can never ultimately satisfy human intelligence.

Regarding the book as a whole, it is clear that Dr Cadoux was faced with a congenial, though by no means easily discharged, undertaking. On p. lx *f.* of the Editor's Preface he explains some of the major difficulties, and from time to time—*e.g.*, on pp. 86 *f.* and 92 *f.*—acknowledges himself as baffled by the author's material and by the real or apparent contradictions which it contains. But to say this is in no way to detract from the ability, still less from the admirable frankness, with which the task has been accomplished.

A few points of detail, for which the author rather than the editor is responsible, may be mentioned as open to serious question. Apart from the vexed problem as to the date of the *Didache* as a whole, Dr Bartlet has evolved an elaborate theory as to its composition in three stages (p. 53 *f.*), the latest of which he assigns to ± 100 A.D. It is satisfactory to note that the editor has supplied full references to works and articles which favour a date in the latter half of the second century, though he himself remains convinced by the arguments upholding the latest of his author's dates. Similarly Dr Bartlet has rigidly adhered to a view of the "*Hippolytean*" *Church Order* in "setting aside the general belief that [it] . . . embodies Roman materials from the pen of Hippolytus himself," which since the appearance of the exhaustive edition from the ready and accomplished pen of Dom Gregory Dix would scarcely find general approval. A minor point, but one very relevant to the author's main thesis, is the apparent misunderstanding (p. 63) of Irenæus' allusion to Old Testament prophecy in his *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, 100.

It would be ungracious not to express in conclusion our indebtedness to Dr Cadoux for having made available to students this valuable work of a sincere scholar and large-hearted Christian.

TREVOR JALLAND.

OXFORD.

BERNARD LORD MANNING: A MEMOIR. By F. Brittain. Heffers. 7s. 6d.

This short memoir will be warmly welcomed by the many friends of Bernard Manning. It is no easy task to give a picture of one whose life was singularly uneventful. Manning rarely left Cambridge after he came into residence at Jesus College in 1912. He was rejected for military service during the last war, and indeed all his life he fought bravely against ill-health. After a few years at Magdalene as a Bye-Fellow, he returned as a Fellow to his old college in 1918, and from 1920 to his death he held first the office of Bursar and then of Tutor. His vacations were nearly always spent with his sisters in their Westmorland home, and his life was given to the service of the Church and of his college. We who counted him among our friends will lay down this little book with the conviction that we know him better, and with quickened sense of our privilege in having known a great Christian and a very loyal gentleman.

But in giving us this picture of our friend Mr Brittain has, I think unconsciously, made a valuable contribution to the history of university life. It is notoriously difficult to describe life at Cambridge, because it is made up of a succession of quite unimportant things, and none of them seem worth recording. Yet it is these little things that produce the indefinable change in the undergraduate during his three years. As we read the story of Manning's work in the college among the undergraduates or in the university as a lecturer or college official we can learn much about Cambridge between the two wars and the ordinary life of the ordinary undergraduate.

And more than this: the book will be of value to all who are thinking and working for the reunion of the Christian Church. Manning described himself on one occasion as a "fanatical follower of Master John Calvin." He was a convinced Congregationalist and had cherished for many years the desire to enter the ministry of that Church. But with this conviction was a real love and admiration for the Church of England, for her worship, her Prayer Book, her discipline. Any tampering with the form of service, any individual revision, any adaptation to suit the "separated" brethren was sternly criticized. He loved the Church of England for what she is: "one of the greatest institutions on earth." So for him there were no short or easy cuts to reunion, no papering over the cracks. As a Congregationalist he, too, was a citizen of no mean city, and what he asked for the Church of England he demanded for his own brethren. Reunion he passionately desired and for many of us he has done more for the cause of Christian reunion in Cambridge and beyond than any. But the reunion he desired was to be real, based on understanding of the history and tradit ons and theology of the various parts of Christ's Church. This is a lesson that needs careful learning in these days.

But the abiding lesson to be learnt in this book is from the life of a humble and sincere Christian layman.

EDWARD ELY.

DOWN PEACOCK'S FEATHERS. Studies in the Contemporary Significance of the General Confession. By D. R. Davies. Centenary Press. 5s.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. By Charles Williams. Centenary Press. 3s. 6d.

Mr Davies's book recalls Anglican readers to two of their possessions which have had too small a place in modern Anglican thinking, for the title is derived from the Homilies ("down peacock's feathers, down proud heart, down vile clay, frail and brittle vessels") and the contents form what is very likely the only commentary upon the General Confession that has yet been written. The words of the Confession give a basis of Christian doctrine—the Almighty and Merciful Father, the human race in whom there is "no health," the cry for pardon and restoration, the promises declared in Christ Jesus, the new life that is godly, righteous and sober, the glory of God's Holy Name. Mr Davies would have given us much, indeed, if he had done no more than recall us to this part of the Church Service and its rich theological teaching. But he has in fact given us more still, for his exposition sets the theological theme convincingly in the midst of the contemporary situation. The doctrines of original sin and of the divine judgment upon it are effectively illustrated from the cultural, political and economic tendencies of the modern world; and the truth of resurrection is discerned in the history of Lutheranism, Russian Orthodoxy and English Congregationalism. We are left asking, What of resurrection in Anglicanism? and our question is checked by the reminder that death comes before resurrection. It is a notable book, and should be widely read. We would wish, however, that Mr Davies had carried his theme a little farther, beyond Justification to Sanctification. Anglicanism has indeed dwelt upon the latter and somewhat neglected the former. Those who recall us to the former would, however, do well to help us to see it as the ground and root of the latter.

Mr Charles Williams's book expounds Divine forgiveness in the manner and method of his other books. Of all the volumes in the Christian Challenge Series this is the one—apart perhaps from Mr Lewis's *Problem of Pain*—which approaches nearest to the avowed intention of the series. The theology is not made easy, indeed its content is somewhat similar to that of Fr Thornton's volume on *The Atonement* in the same series. But the theology is presented with a rare freshness of illustration and a freedom from the ways of professional theological writing. The biblical discussion is preceded by a consideration of forgiveness in Shakespeare's plays! Mr Williams misses little of the transcendent factor that marks Mr Davies's book, but he combines it with a factor that comes from mysticism and Catholicism.

DURHAM. A. M. RAMSEY.

FROM THE ASHES. By Ashley Sampson. Williams and Norgate. 3s. 6d.

From the Ashes, by Ashley Sampson, is a book of poems selected from a good many years' work, which varies considerably in style and sub-

ject. Mr Sampson is a thoughtful poet, and the individual nature of his subject-matter is evident even in the lighter poems. He writes of a fly, for instance:

> God in my hour has given me
> An eye so mighty it can see
> A million ways He might have done
> The thing for which He chose but one.

In this skilful, concise way he comments also upon cats, telephones and propaganda ("We are the wise-cracks of the world").

As is to be expected from Mr Sampson, his best poems deal with religion, and here his wit does not leave him. So when he thinks of the Mass, bread becomes

> . . . the mighty leveller
> Of all our needs to one dark night.

Again, in "Renouncement" he tells in verse which reminds one of Herbert how the soul was ready to renounce everything to God except one little corner kept for the pleasure of sin, only to learn in the end that God

> . . . did not want the earth or stars
> Or any of the hemispheres
> Which at a word He had created:
> The sea was His—for He had made it;
> But what he wanted—burning clear
> Was the darling thing I held so dear.

In another he uses rhetoric to build up an impressive picture of the destruction of the world, when

> . . . in the empty day,
> Angels may weep and gather into bundles.

And in perhaps the best poem in the book he contemplates Gethsemane:

> For in that dangerous hour God fought with God
> And all the lights of Heaven were afraid.

In their purely lyrical qualities these poems are not so distinguished as in their thought. The imagery seems to come at the bidding of the will rather than that of the imagination. Mr Sampson may be half-aware of this, for he writes several poems about the images thrown up by the subconscious mind. For one who has such an obvious command of technique, he is rather unadventurous in form and rhythm, and here and there his diction is dull from over-use by other poets ("glamorous," "myriad," "water's cool embrace"). But it is refreshing to find such clear-cut, witty statement in verse at a time when too much poetry is like the sweeping-up of a museum after a blitz.

MILLOM. NORMAN NICHOLSON.

SHORTER NOTICES

RETRIBUTION AND THE CHRISTIAN. By Stephen Hobhouse. Fellowship of Reconciliation. 2d.

In this pamphlet Mr Stephen Hobhouse criticizes the doctrine of "just retribution" recently sponsored by the Archbishop of Canterbury and substitutes for it a doctrine of redemptive love, "a generous spirit which draws upon the God-revealed wisdom of both East and West." He appeals, not only to the New Testament and the Pauline use of *dikaiosune*, but also to William Law, Boehme and Berdyaev, in support of his view that retribution is not "an activity of the God revealed by Jesus, considered as a Person," but an "impersonal cosmic activity of God considered as Law."

That such a view presents us with a paradox which "no metaphysics can thoroughly explain" he freely admits. Like Miss Ruth Pitter, he is prepared to

> "Embrace the awful Paradox
> Nor wonder overmuch."

He suggests that such a view might not only federate Eastern and Western wisdom but also implement the abolition of war and the redemption of our civilization. He hopes for a "spiritual and intellectual genius" able to fill in the sketch-map of the alternative doctrine offered in this pregnant, lucid and suggestive pamphlet. This is an essay on the nature of righteousness which calls for far more consideration than its slender size and modest manner and price would seem at first to infer.

M. CHANING-PEARCE.

OXFORD.

THE CHURCH OF THE EASTERN CHRISTIANS. By Nicholas Zernov. S.P.C.K. 4s.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH DOING? By H. P. Van Dusen. S.C.M. Press. 5s.

CHRISTIAN TEACHING ABOUT SEX. Edited by L. Hodgson. S.P.C.K. 1s.

A WEALTH OF TREASURE. By Jocelyn Perkins. Mowbray. 1s. 3d.

THIS MY SON. By J. W. Coutts. James Clarke. 2s. 6d.

Dr Zernov believes that Christian unity is God's will, which the threat of totalitarianism makes more apparent. He writes this book as a member of the Eastern Church who is familiar with the Western, and recounts the teachings and customs of his own Church to assist union, especially with the Anglican branch. He includes a survey of the Anglo-Orthodox contacts through the Non-Jurors, Palmer and Khomiakov, the American Episcopalians, Birkbeck, and latterly through the International Church Conferences and the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. He concludes with a chapter on "Hopes and Fears" for the future, in which he says: "The greatest enemy to reunion is the spiritual apathy of Church members, their acquiescence in division and want of a genuine desire to see unity restored." Couple

this with another quotation, and the author provides the reason why reunion is unlikely to come by mutual curiosity. The cause of disunion lies within each Church. Only by looking within can unity come without. He says: "At different periods of history different doctrinal obstacles have been singled out as being the most important . . . [which] may also indicate that the true causes of disunity lie in another sphere altogether; and that the controversies of the past have dealt only with symptoms, not causes." Well, essays in understanding such as this are useful to create an atmosphere for discussion in which acrimony and misrepresentation do not widen existing schism, but reunion does not come by mutual accord between different traditions. Apathy and the problem of the continual shifting of doctrinal emphasis in reunion discussion are to be overcome by a new understanding of what it means to be the Church, testifying to Jesus Christ: then all traditions come together under a judgment which also stands over the present members of each communion.

Dr Van Dusen's book is a summary of ecumenical Christianity during what, with unconscious irony, he describes as "the most sanguine Armageddon in history." Part I deals with the Churches in Nazi-occupied Europe. Here the title might better be "What God is doing to the Church"; for out of Oflag IID comes a message saying, "Captivity has been a grace to us all," and its declaration concerning the Church is austerely apostolic. There are also numerous instances of courageous resistance to attacks on man as man, anti-semitism and attempted suppression of Christian proclamation, epitomized in this story of Bishop Berggrav. Quisling interrogated the Bishop for a long time, and finally, losing his temper, blurted out: "You triple traitor, you deserve to be beheaded." The Primate replied quietly: "Well, here I am."

The missionary churches dependent upon Europe for money and leadership are the subject of Part II. Two facts stand out: first the rallying of other churches to the aid of the war-orphaned, and second the vigour of the young churches in assuming sudden responsibility for administration. Part III describes the working of the ecumenical organizations. Here anticipation of the part organized Christianity will play in the reordering of the future world colours, to its disadvantage, a narrative of solid achievements. The very interesting concluding section, "World Christianity To-morrow," is based on the generalizations arrived at by Professor K. S. Latourette in his *History of the Expansion of Christianity*. There are two appendices, one on the "Outlook for Church Union" and the other extolling the "Proposed Scheme for South India."

Christian Teaching about Sex, a pamphlet prepared for the Oxford Diocesan Council for Moral Welfare, is useful for those who wish to counter in argument the common objections of the educated. The aim of the sponsors, however, is to gain acceptance for "the Christian standard in sex morality." To my mind the I-Thou directness of C. S. Lewis's broadcast talk, "Chastity," in the Christian Behaviour Series, is a manner of presentation more likely to secure living obedience than the round and around of these fifty paragraphs.

A Wealth of Treasure is a lecture recording the instruments of worship bestowed on and spoiled from Westminster Abbey during its history. The laudable motive of God's glory transforms so easily in deed into institutional pomp that one wonders if there may not be a divine caution lying in the sacristy's vicissitudes.

This My Son is a gentle and unconvincing book in the Liberal Protestant style on the theme that man is a child of God and needs to be recalled to childlikeness. The evident kindliness of the author disarms criticism, but he pirouettes where he should wrestle. This is especially noticeable in his casual references to contemporary life. An exposition of the nature of man which does not probe, *healingly*, into the perversions of the present is evangelically irresponsible. We are weary of being told of the monstrosity of totalitarianism and mass-production. "Dear Dr Coutts, what must we do?" He cannot evade the obligation to answer since he declares that the great rule for Christians is *solvitur ambulando*.

M. P. Ralph Bowman.

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The Churches Face the Challenge. By Frank Ballard. Nisbet. 2s. 6d.

Mr Ballard states in a sub-title that his little book is an "examination of the Five Standards added by British Religious Leaders to the Pope's Five Points," and in the preface that his main purpose has been to read the Five Standards in the light and teaching of Christ.

He was moved to write, he tells us, because in attending groups formed by many different denominations to debate the Points and Standards he "detected a disposition to take the published principles for granted, and to make no effort to test them in the light of New Testament teaching."

One is tempted to suggest that, considering the signatories to the Points and Standards, there is some justification for the attitude of the groups; nevertheless, while disagreeing with many of the author's premisses and conclusions, I hope that his book, which contains much interesting matter, will form the subject for further debates and discussions by the same groups.

The chapters deal with wealth and possessions, towards which the Christian attitude may be summed up in one word, "Stewardship," with the family as a social unit, "a necessary training-ground of souls for life and eternity"; with the urgent need for the revival of the sense of vocation in life's work—"who sweeps a room as for thy laws makes that and the action fine"; and with the need for a universal sense of responsibility for the use of the resources of the earth.

The most useful and stimulating, to my mind, are the chapters on education. These contain sound criticism, constructive proposals, and interesting and suggestive comparison of the educational ideals and traditions of the Greeks and the Hebrews.

Marguerite Howse.

Presteigne.

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